

REMARKS

The office action of February 17, 2010, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the patent to Cantacuzene in view of the patent to Sander et al.

In view of the Examiner's rejection of the claims, applicant has amended claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that the claim presently on file differs essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the methods disclosed in the references.

Turning now to the references and particularly to the reference to Cantacuzene, it can be seen that this patent discloses a process for galvanizing a metal.

The patent to Sander et al. discloses a method for controlling metal coatings on wire or metal strip emerging from metal baths.

The Examiner combined these references in determining that claim 1 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that neither of these references, nor their combination, teaches a method for suppressing the evaporation of zinc in which both an isolating gas layer and a conventional gas mixture are present. In the present invention there is a first gas mixture in the furnace snout, and a second, isolating gas mixture in the snout between the surface of the metal bath and the first gas mixture. The second gas mixture is argon with admixtures of butane and/or propane. The references do not teach a method that utilizes two gas mixtures as defined in the claim now on file.

Thus, it is submitted that the combination of references relied upon by the Examiner does not teach or suggest the presently claimed invention.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

HM-612

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on May 17, 2010.

By:   
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